Progression of Addiction

in the Addict and in the Family

**The Alcoholic/Addict                                                            The Family**

Increased tolerance – using more of the                                 Increased tolerance to

substance/behavior to get the same effect.                             alcoholic/addict behavior.

Takes more risks

Blackouts occur.                                                                     Suppression – family blocks out

Addict’s behavior excellerates their perceptions.

Euphoric recall is the focus – Minimizing – “Things aren’t that bad.”

         Recalls highs not painful consequences.

Sneaks drinks/drugs – hides evidence           .                       Plays detective – searches

Sneaks out, hides porn sites, points the finger for bottles/drugs, evidence of acting out.

Preoccupied with using/acting out.                                          Preoccupied with user/addict.

Gulps Drinks, spends more                                                  Urgency increases.  Prods addict for a promise

time acting out not to drink/use/act out.

Denies there is a problem                                                      Family tries to hide problem from

those outside the family.

Develops alibi system.                                                           May confront or nag addict while

simultaneously making excuses.

Alternate between aggression when acting out            Alternate between blaming, shaming and

or drinking then remorse after.                                              lashing out, then feeling guilty.

Tries to control or stop drinking/acting out Tries to control or stop them from

without help.   Drinking/acting out without help.

Feels shame for not being able to stop.                                  Feels shame they can’t stop the addict.

Loses friends.                                                                          Family becomes isolated.

Experiences severe physical symptoms                                Experiences severe physical symptoms

digestive, insomnia, etc.                                                         ulcers, headaches, nervous breakdowns.

Seeks help                                                                              Seeks help

Or                                                                                            OR

Deteriorates physically and emotionally.    Deteriorates physically and emotionally

                             .